

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

24 to 35 (Cancelled).

36. (Currently Amended) A filter module having a plurality of connections for supplying or removing a fluid from the device, at least one of said connections comprising:

a closure element;

a wall formed in the closure element having an automatically closing slit-shaped indentation forming a germ-proof closure when closed; and

means for fastening the closure element to a connecting element disposed adjacent to the wall.

37. (Previously Presented) The filter module according to claim 36, wherein the filter module is configured for one of dialysis, hemofiltration and ultrafiltration.

38. (Previously Presented) The filter module according to claim 36, wherein the closure element comprises one of an inside surface forming a germ-proof closure with the outside surface of the connecting element, and an outside surface forming a germ-proof closure with an inside surface of a bushing-like connection.

39 to 54. (Cancelled).

55. (Withdrawn) A method for using a closure device for medical items, comprising the steps of:

disposing a closure element in facing relationship with a connecting tube;

pushing the connecting tube through a wall formed in the closure element, thus opening an automatically closing slit-shaped indentation of the wall forming a germ-proof closure when closed; and

attaching fastening means disposed adjacent to the wall for connecting the closure element to the connecting tube.

56. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 55, further comprising the steps of selecting the medical item to be a filter module for dialysis, hemofiltration or ultrafiltration, and using the connection between the closure element and the connecting tube for in-line sterilization of the filter module.

57. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 55, further comprising the step of placing the closure element on projecting connections of the fastening means.

58. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 55, further comprising the step of inserting the closure element into bushing-like connections of the fastening means.

59. (New) The filter module according to claim 36, wherein the closure element is substantially cylindrical, the fastening means include a cylindrical surface, and the slit-shaped indentation is formed on an end face of the cylindrical closure element.

60. (Previously Presented) The filter module according to claim 36, wherein the closure element is symmetrical about an axis of the connection.

61. (Previously Presented) The filter module according to claim 36, wherein the slit-shaped indentation is in the shape of a cross or a star.

62. (Previously Presented) The filter module according to claim 36, further comprising a second wall opposite to the wall having the indentation, the second wall having an opening for passage of a fluid.

63. (Previously Presented) The filter module according to claim 62, wherein a middle portion of the indentation is aligned with the opening.

64. (Previously Presented) The filter module according to claim 62, further comprising a surface extending around the opening in the second wall, the surface lying in a plane substantially perpendicular to a joining direction of the closure element to the connecting element.

65. (Previously Presented) The filter module according to claim 36, wherein the closure element is formed of one piece.

66. (Previously Presented) The filter module according to claim 36, wherein the wall and the closure element are made of plastic.

67. (Previously Presented) The filter module according to claim 66, wherein the plastic is silicone.

68. (Previously Presented) The filter module according to claim 36, wherein the wall comprises a spring element acting in a radial direction.

69. (Previously Presented) The filter module according to claim 36, wherein the slit-shaped indentation forms a germ-proof closure adapted to withstand a pressure difference up to about ± 0.25 bar.